Lauren Morlock

Unit: On Death and Dying

Grade: 12

Culminating Project: Comparative essay between their own culture/another’s on death

Lesson: 1 out of 15 [Week 1]

Topic: Introduction

**Context**: Students will begin their three-week unit on death and dying.

**Short Term Objectives**:

* Students will be able to evaluate their own personal cultural experiences with death
* Students will be able to gain insight into other cultures and their processes in relation to death
* Students will be able to define death in relation to literature via characterization

**Long Term Objectives:**

* Students will be able to respectfully compare their cultural experience with death with another culture
* Students will be able to understand the different forms death can take both in cultures and literature

**Standards**:

Reading Standards for Information Text 6-12

*Key Ideas and Details*

Grades 11-12 students:

1a. Develop factual, interpretive, and evaluative questions for further exploration of the topic.

Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12

*Comprehension and Collaboration*

Grades 11-12 students:

1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; sunthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions wen possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

1e. Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.

**Overview:**

In this introductory lesson, students will explore their own cultures and views on death and dying. Without using any outside literature, students will answer this question solely based on their own experiences. The majority of this lesson is student-based discussion as an easy introduction to the topic.

**Procedure:**

*Anticipatory set:*

* Students will complete the death culture similarity handout
* Students will come back together as a class to discuss their answers, reactions, etc.

*Guided Practice:*

* Students will discuss their different personal beliefs on death and their interactions with it
* Students will discuss what they know about other cultures and how it relates to their own beliefs
* Students will discuss how death is portrayed in literature and other forms of media (Death characterization)

*Independent Practice:*

* Students will start discussion on the group NING about the in-class discussion and continue their thoughts and comments on the cultural processes we compared

**Materials:**

* Handout on comparative cultures

Handout: Death and Mourning: Traditions from Around the World

How similar are these cross-cultural traditions to your own personal values and family

practices around death and mourning? How are they similar or different?

1. Hiawatha Native Americans: We try to be there when the death occurs - death is part of the journey of life and we are there to help the person along the way.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

2. Roma cultures believe that spirits surround us all of the time. These must all be carefully guarded against, or combated by the use of spells and charms. Death is a senseless, unnatural occurrence that should anger those who die.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

3. Most of the time Quaker funerals are not lead by a minister. Usually a loved one will introduce a memory or thought about a person who died followed by other people who share their memories.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

4. Vietnamese Buddhist Community: As a person is dying we chant in permanency of the life. We want to make the person happy before they die, and we want to make the family understand that death is a part of our life.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

5. Ethiopian Orthodox Christian: For a deceased person from this community, it is better for the body to be cleaned and dressed by a person of the same-sex as a way to show respect.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

6. Ghana funerals are profoundly important rituals—creative, colorful affairs that affirm the continent's most powerful traditions and beliefs.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

7. Tibet's 'sky burial' involves leaving the body on a mountain so it can be eating by vultures, returning it to nature. When the body dies, the spirit leaves, so there is no need to keep the body.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

8. Some Roma cultures are concerned not only with the pain and heartbreak of the final separation from a loved one. They are also worried about the possible revenge the dead might seek against those who remain in the world of the living.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different

9. Vietnamese Buddhist Community: Some people believe that within the body the brain may die but the heart is still working a little bit. This makes the last minutes of life a very important time for the person to settle down, to get ready for rebirth.

Very Similar Somewhat Similar Somewhat Different Very Different